

**SECRET**

**DD/S 64-1003**

Approved For Release 2002/08/14 : CIA-RDP84-00780R000600110018-7  
DOD/STRATEGY

F I L E / Personnel

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Director of Training

**SUBJECT :** Clerical Recruitment Standards

1. At the briefing by the Chief, Intelligence School on 16 January 1964, a bar chart was presented showing that only 26 per cent of the clerical employees processed during Fiscal Year 1963 were able to qualify in typing and only 16 per cent in shorthand at the time of entrance on duty. I believe it was also reported that we use the same clerical tests as are used by the Civil Service Commission which led to the conclusion that perhaps our clerical recruitment standards should be examined to determine whether or not they might be too low. Based upon the information reported, the Office of Personnel was asked to examine our standards of clerical proficiency with a view toward raising them rather substantially in our future clerical recruitment.

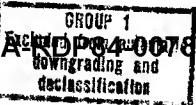
2. As a matter of your general interest, the Office of Personnel reports that at the end of October 1963, steps were taken to raise the standards for clericals entering the Agency and that the typing and shorthand tests given are considerably more demanding than those used by the Civil Service Commission. Our typing test is ten minutes, theirs only five. Our error/net word scale is tougher. We will not accept school certification--the Commission does. Similarly, the shorthand requirement is more rigorous.

3. It is additionally interesting that all people who enter on duty through the pool are tested for typing regardless of whether or not they have applied for typing positions, including couriers, key-punch operators, machine operators, and individuals who have applied for clerical positions which require no typing. Of those who applied for typing positions, 630 were tested and 470 (74.6 per cent) qualified. While all of these did not pass the test when it was first given on the Tuesday afternoon of the first week on duty, it has been the observation that many do not succeed because of the pressures and strains of adjustment many of them are undergoing their first time away from home and in their first job. A similar situation exists with regard to the shorthand where all people who claim any exposure are tested whether they are applying for stenographic positions or not. Among those who applied for stenographic jobs, 333 were tested and 91.9 per cent qualified in typing and 70.9 per cent qualified in shorthand. Among those who claimed exposure, 151 of the typist applicants were tested in shorthand and 74.8 per cent failed.

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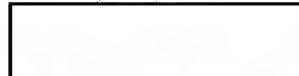
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4. The figures reported by the Office of Personnel are computed from a different statistical base and, therefore, do not correlate exactly with those reported in the 16 January briefing, but it would appear from this analysis that the new clerical recruitment standards adopted toward the end of last October are producing an acceptable level of EOD competence, and we do not really have any particular need to revise them upward any further at this time.



25X1

Special Assistant to the  
Deputy Director for Support

SA-DD/S:RHW:kkb (18 Feb 64)

Distribution:

Orig & 1 - Adse  
1 - DD/S Chrono  
✓ DD/S Subject w/background

CC: DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL

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12/25 64-01700  
47

JAN FEB 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : Clerical Recruitment Standards

REFERENCE : Memo fr A-DD/S to D/Pers, dtd 21 Jan 64, same subject

1. This memorandum is for your information.

2. At the end of October 1963, we took steps to raise the standards for clericals entering the Agency, and to re-emphasize the typing and shorthand standards which we apply. Attached (Tab A) is a copy of a memorandum sent to the Chief, Personnel Recruitment Division, by Chief, Personnel Operations Division, on this subject. Paragraph 6 of our weekly report of current interest items, dated 18 October 1963, is also extracted and attached (Tab B). These higher standards have been in effect since. The typing and shorthand tests and standards are more demanding than those of the Civil Service Commission. Our typing test is ten minutes, their's only five. Our error/net word scale is tougher. We will not accept school certification--the Commission does. Similarly, the shorthand requirement is more rigorous. (See memorandum by an applicant regarding Civil Service tests--Tab C). Tab D describes the intellectual (SET test) standards we apply.

3. The information on our experience in FY 1963 which you note in your memorandum has been distorted, certainly unintentionally and probably unconsciously. The facts are as follows:

a. All who EOD in the Pool are tested for typing, including those "straight" clerks who claim no typing. In FY 1963 this included 290 couriers, key punch operators, machine operators, etc., who had not applied for typing positions. 238 (82.1%) failed.

b. Of those who applied for typing positions, 630 were tested and 470 (74.6%) qualified. Admittedly, these 470 did not all pass on the first test which is given on Tuesday afternoon of the first week on duty.

[redacted] has observed over her several years in CAB that the strains or adjustment (often to the first job and the first time away from home) are very great for these youngsters and is, in fact, surprised at the number who do pass the first time.

c. Further, in accord with the OTR policy of testing all who claim exposure though they may not be asking employment as such, 151 of the typist applicants were tested in shorthand. 74.8% failed.

d. On the other hand, of those who applied for stenographic jobs, 333 were tested and 91.9% qualified in typing and 70.9% in shorthand.

e. Also obscured in the earlier report was the fact that most of the non-typing clerks we hire are men, for courier and similar jobs; and we depend on those female typist applicants who fail to qualify as typists to fill the requirement for female clerks.

SUBJECT: Clerical Recruitment Standards

4. We believe that the Training people should take satisfaction in the great number of applicants who, with a very few days of training help (and adjustment to their environment), are able to qualify. According to our totals, which differ by 30 from those of OTR, 1253 were tested in typing and 828 qualified; 488 were tested in shorthand of whom 276 qualified. In reciting these figures we must, at the risk of arguing the obvious, point out that had we accepted school certifications or applied lower standards and tested only those who claimed proficiency, we would have had a lower rate of failure to qualify at EOD. We would also have had less-skilled typists and stenographers being assigned to the using offices.

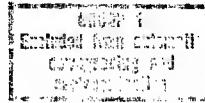


*[Signature]* Emmett D. Edwards  
Director of Personnel

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Attachments: A/S

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31 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Personnel Recruitment Division  
SUBJECT : Clerical Recruitment Standards--Fall 1963

This will confirm our discussions in the afternoon meetings of the D/Pers regarding the raising of standards for clerical recruiting. I believe your recruiters should be instructed essentially as follows:

1. Budgetary and ceiling limitations require that we raise our sights on all clerical recruiting. We are experiencing increasing difficulty in assigning marginal people and can no longer afford to bring them into the Pool with the hope that jobs can be found for them. To assist you in screening for better quality, we have raised the SET scores to these new minimums: GS-03, Total 80, V 22, N 20; GS-04, Total 94, V 25, N 20, CA 30; GS-05, Total 100, V 25, N 25, CA 30. You should attempt, to the limits possible, to make equivalent adjustments in the standards for the State Employment Service Tests. We recognize that this is not always possible as we sometimes do not get the numerical results but only adjectival groupings. Do what you can, however. As for typing and shorthand standards, we are enclosing, in case you don't have it, the scale for typing. Shorthand, we remind you, is three minutes verbatim dictation at the rate of eighty words a minute which must be transcribed in twenty minutes with not more than five errors. You must insist with all of your sources that we cannot accept lower standards. We hope that this does not mean entire loss of some sources but rather that they are able to see the light and raise their own levels. We can no longer place typists who do not pass our standards. A college graduate who does not pass the test, we cannot place as a professional as has sometimes been done in the past. The offices are full of this kind. If a man or woman is truly professional, do not recruit him as a clerk.

CIA INTERNAL USE ONLY

SUBJECT: Clerical Recruitment Standards--Fall 1963

2. The money for operating the Pool is limited more than it has ever been before. We cannot afford to carry for long periods of time the poor quality clerks until we can find some office upon whom they can be forced. The offices now approaching saturation are accepting only the top quality clerical. We think it not unreasonable to suggest that in the long run, the Agency might well find it possible to do with fewer clerks if we concentrated more on quality. The Chief, Personnel Operations Division, has instructed the Chief, Clerical Assignment Branch, to be tougher in screening applicant files and to cancel those marginal cases already in process. We are all going to have to judge our performance on the quality of the input, not merely quantity.



Chief, Personnel Operations Division

STAT

Attachment: A/S

Distribution:

Orig. & 1 - Addressee  
1 - C/CAB  
1 - Exec. Asst. to D/Pers  
1 - C/POD/OP

STAT

OP/POD/[redacted]mkv (30 Oct. 63)

<u>GROSS WORDS</u>	<u>MAXIMUM ERRORS PERMITTED</u>	<u>NET WORDS</u>	<u>GROSS WORDS</u>	<u>MAXIMUM ERRORS PERMITTED</u>	<u>NET WORDS</u>
40	0	40	58	10	48
41	1	40	59	11	48
42	2	40	60	12	48
43	3	40	61	12	49
44	4	40	62	13	49
45	5	40	63	14	49
46	6	40	64	14	50
47	6	41	65	15	50
48	7	41	66	15	51
49	7	42	67	16	51
50	7	43	68	16	52
51	8	43	69	16	53
52	9	43	70	16	54
53	9	44	71	17	54
54	9	45	72	18	54
55	10	45	73	18	55
56	10	46	74	19	55
57	10	47	75	19	56

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C-O-P-Y

Extract from weekly report of Current Interest Items dated 18 October 1963

6. Higher Standards for Clerical Recruitment

Some reduction of clerical recruitment requirements as a result of current ceiling limitations and a reluctance on the part of operating offices to accept clerical appointees with relatively low skills has prompted a review of our screening standards. As a result, the "cutting scores" on the SET tests (verbal, numerical, and clerical skills) have been raised to screen out low-scoring applicants. In addition, clerical recruiters will inform the schools at which they recruit that typing and shorthand skills will be tested and scored by the Agency's rules (which differ slightly from general practice) and explain these rules to them.

(Ordinarily typing speed is the net score after subtracting errors made from gross words typed during a ten-minute test. The Agency uses a graduated scale of errors in relation to words typed which places a higher premium on accuracy. In shorthand testing, many organizations now use a "completion" type of test in which the candidate fills in words omitted in a printed transcript of the text dictated. The Agency's system requires the candidate to transcribe the entire text from her notes.)

We believe that these steps will select candidates of higher general ability and will reduce the number of cases in which an appointee fails to qualify in shorthand or typing at EOD and must be reassigned.

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CIVIL SERVICE TEST

On 3 November 1958 I was requested to take the Civil Service examination to compare it with our Agency examination. The results are as follows:

The Civil Service Typing Test was approximately the same as ours; but, in my estimation, the shorthand did not compare. I had two years of shorthand and was up to 100 w.p.m. when I took the CIA test, but I felt I was under more pressure in comparison to the Civil Service Test. The majority of the girls, as I noticed, who took our exam just came out of high school and were not used to being dictated in transcribing such long letters. I know I didn't learn to transcribe long letters until the latter part of my second year of shorthand. Also, our test was not dictated in phrases such as: "as soon as possible", "I have not been able", etc. They were dictated in such a way that each word had to be written out separately instead of in the brief form which gives the subject more speed.

The Civil Service Shorthand Test was dictated for three minutes at 80 w.p.m., but the similarity ends there. Instead of transcribing the whole letter, the subject transcribes only part of the letter. The rest of the letter dictated was written out with blanks scattered throughout it. The subject had to fill in the missing word or words in the blanks from her shorthand notes, then looking at a list of words with A, B, C, or D written beside them. If one of these words was the one that went in the blank, then the subject put the corresponding letter (A, B, C or D) in the blank. If the word to go in the blank did not appear in the word list, then the subject would put E. After all that was completed, the subject transferred all the letters written in the blanks on a standard answer sheet. Thirty-five minutes were given to answer, and fifteen minutes were given to transfer the answers to the answer sheet.

I found the Civil Service Shorthand Test much easier than the CIA test, and I think if we could give one similar to theirs, more girls would pass.

STAT

*[Signature]*

**Civil Service Exam**  
**(Sample similar to Test)**

Choose "E" if word is not listed

Transcript

Afford	A
Agency	B
Alternative	A
Assignment	B
In	B
Instance	B
Little	.
Military	.
Music	B
Natural	A
None	C
Opportunities	A
Organize	B
Organization	D
People	C
Persons	.
Rotation	.
Some	B
Staff	A
Satisfactory	C
The	A
Their	A
Those	B

In many               employment is  
not a               to              , since the  
              of                             affords        or  
              for               for people in         
              of        groups.  
      

Etc. Etc.

(Test is divided into paragraphs)

35 minutes allowed for this

In many instances, staff employment is not a satisfactory alternative to military assignments since the nature of the Agency's organization affords little or no opportunity for rotation for people in some of these groups.

(Shorthand Notes)

	A	B	C	D	E
1			x		
	A	B	C	D	E
			x		
	A	B	C	x	E
3			x		
	A	B	C	D	E
4	x				

(Etc.)

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T  
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B

D

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ADMINISTRATIVE--INTERNAL USE ONLY

Intellectual

a. No test required for:

Graduates of a four year college

Graduates of a two year junior college

Completion of sophomore year in a four year college

Graduation from a two year secretarial school (at least  
18 months instruction)

(School transcript in lieu of SET test)

b. SET Test administered by the recruiter.

SET Test Minimums			
	GS-03	GS-04	GS-05
V	22 (14)	25 (14, 16 for Steno)	25 (17)
N	20 (17)	20 (17)	25 (25)
CA	27 (23)	30 (23)	30 (27)
TOTAL	80 (65)	94 (84)	100

\*NOTE: The figures in parentheses are those used prior to  
1 November 1963.

The total scores are used when either the numerical or clerical aptitude test (N or CA) falls below the minimum cut-off scores. No score lower than the cut-off for V will be acceptable even if total exceeds minimum.

ADMINISTRATIVE--INTERNAL USE ONLY

DD/S 64-0297

01/15/64-01/97  
S E C R E T

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P # 18 484-5 SP 5

F I L E Personnel 15

21 JAN 1964:

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

SUBJECT : Clerical Recruitment Standards

1. I understand that during Fiscal Year 1963 only 26% of all our clerical recruits were able to qualify in typing at the time they entered on duty, and only 16% were able to qualify in shorthand. I also understand that we use the same test battery as is used by the Civil Service Commission. This rather shocking performance by our new clerical employees makes me wonder whether our recruitment standards may not be too low.

2. The present situation where our clerical recruitment requirements have been significantly reduced may be the opportune time to examine critically our standards of clerical proficiency with a view toward raising them rather substantially.

3. If we are going to change our standards we should be in a position to apply them well before clearance processing begins on any of the June graduates whom we may plan to employ. I would, therefore, like to hear from you on this by 7 February 1964.

SIGNED H. Gates Lloyd

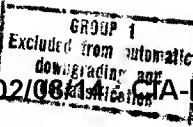
A - ~~Deputy Director~~  
for Support

SA-DD/S:RHW:kkb (17 Jan 64)

Distribution:

Orig & 1 - Addressee  
1 - DD/S Chrono  
1 - DD/S Subject

S E C R E T



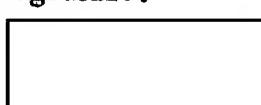
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TRANSMITTAL SLIP 17 Jan 64 0

TO: Colonel White  
via [redacted] and Mr. Lloyd [redacted]

ROOM NO. [redacted] BUILDING V.T.

REMARKS: A MEMO TO D/PERS.  
ABOUT RAISING CLERICAL  
RECRUITMENT STANDARDS IS  
ATTACHED AS YOU REQUESTED.  
Recommend your signature.



RHW

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